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HOT AIR VERSES

From the
Hot Water Town

Souvenir Edition


—BY—

J. W. TORBETT, M. D.

*Proprietor Bethesda Bath House and Infirmary
Marlin, Texas*

PRICE 50 CENTS

For Sale by
L. McDonagh, Marlin, Texas





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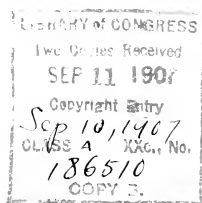
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Southwest Publishing Co., Houston, Printers



**DEDICATED
TO THE VICTIMS.**

Here's to the sufferers from
chronic disease,
Who vainly have wandered
in searching for ease,
And have found it at last in
this hot water.
May their hearts e'er be filled
with sunshine and laughter,
In this present life
and in the hereafter.
May they never
find anything
hotter



INTRODUCTION.

Recreation, we are told, is merely a change of occupation. What is one man's labor is another man's play. The farmer may marvel to see the man who works in an office put in his spare time at early morn and dewy eve cultivating a small space in his backyard in the expectation of having a supply of beans at the season when they are a drug on the market. But the office man is wise and knows he will reap a profit even if his garden should produce nothing but leaves.

When a physician has listened all day—and often been called up at night to hear accounts of troubles, real and imaginary—what more healthful form of relaxation than a flight on the winged steeds. What better way to rest his weary brain than to mount his Pegasus and fly away into the cerulean? And if perchance he does not reach the heights attained by Milton and Shakespeare, well, what of it? They didn't have to drop suddenly to earth to dole out liver pills and liniment to a complaining humanity.

The poet is not appreciated; he never has been. Homer, one of our earliest poets, had to beg for bread. Then when he was dead and the public knew that encouragement could not result in flooding the land with "pot-boilers," they hastened to do him honor. It would seem as if the principle of appreciation is: Be sure he's dead, then go ahead.

But if he wins appreciation his fate may be as sad, for it brings him to the attention of the great, and often results in the conferring of an empty title with its attendant responsibilities. There was once a cannibal queen of such a sentimental turn of mind that she was called Annie Laurie, which was shortened to Laurie. One day

a band of missionaries visited her island, and among them was a tender poet, who so pleased the fancy of the gentle queen that his name went down in history as the poet Laurie ate.

The lot of the poet laureate today is not an enviable one. For an annual pittance and the right to tack a "Sir" to his name, he is expected to make poetry to order at the request of royalty. Small wonder if some of his perpetrations are such as would merit beheading in a less enlightened age, and are now meted out capital punishment at the hands of the joke-makers. But he deserves his fate, for the Muse should not be hampered by the harness of commercialism and made to do stunts to order like a dancing bear. The only time to write poetry is when the spirit moves you; in other words, when you just can't help it. In that case you are entitled to forgiveness. In introducing this collection of verses and their eminent author, it can truly be said that he was impelled by this impetus. If his garden produces naught but leaves he has his profit nevertheless, for the verses were written for pleasure and recreation and not for lucre. He can express himself in the plaintive lines of Bill Nye:

"If all the poems I have written
Were piled together in a pile,
And by a candle it was litten
You could see the fire for half a mile.
And all the gold that I have gotten
For all the poems I have wrote,
It would not hurt the feeblest kitten
To pour it moulted down her throat."

THE EDITOR.

PREFACE.

I don't know whether I ever had a Muse or not, but these lines, written about various subjects from Cupid down and from my youth up, have served in the hours of retrospection to "amuse" me.

If I have a Muse she (for I would not have any but a female Muse) must have rheumatism at times, because my poetic feet are not always mates.

Some of these lines are written in a horizontal position to read while sitting up; while others are written in a vertical position to be read while lying down, because I was frequently lying when I wrote them. They were not, however, written or published with any thought of winning literary fame or money, but simply as a souvenir for the many friends I have all over the State, who know me well and alone can appreciate them. But—

"A little foolishness now and then
"Is relished by the best of men."
There's nothing like a great broad grin
If it is free from guile and sin,
 To keep the blues away.
For I'm a son of Erin's Isle,
And always wear a beaming smile,
Although it's not the latest style,
It helps my liver work off its bile,
And keeps my patients gay.

THE RHYMSTER'S APOLOGY.

Excuse me, please, if I talk in rhyme—
I'm troubled that way most all the time.
It troubled me much when I was a boy,
And many the hours I did employ
In making love rhymes to dear school girls
Of their azure eyes and home-made curls.
On Christmas day or on Valentine,
Instead of to one I wrote to nine.
I wrote in rhyme the common news,
Just to amuse—each was my muse,
Each was the angel of my dreams.
The guardian power for me, it seems,
That played love's tune on my heart strings
And brought my soul a thousand things.
E'en to old maids of twice my years
I wrote in rhyme of smiles and tears,
Of ruby lips and rosy cheeks,
The kind a lover gladly seeks.
Each one, of course, these traits possessed,
And so each verse to all addressed
Did serve me well, and "raised no sand"
Until each learned 'twas second hand.
I then enjoyed some warm old times
From girls I'd wooed with warmed-o'er rhymes.
I took a course of vapor baths,
And wandered through old work-day paths;
I've wed a wife; we have a boy,
And still my heart runs o'er with joy.
And rag-time rhymes come just the same,
So I don't think that I'm to blame.
I've tried so hard such stuff to quit
But nothing helps my brain a bit.
So still I'll sing when I've got time
My soul's great joys in rag-time rhyme,
And from my heart drive out all care
By this my soul's swift-winged prayer:
I hope and pray that my lame song
Will do no other soul a wrong:
As it helps me, once in a while,
May it help others raise a smile.

The first subject written about was Woman, as it was the first subject that interested me. I used to wink at the girls when I was a baby in my cradle.

Eve, the first woman, was the greatest invention of God, and a perfect creature of Nature unadorned by Art; while the modern woman is a perfect creature of Art, frequently unadorned by Nature. Nevertheless she is

MAN'S BETTER HALF.

So here's to luck of woman,
The "better half" of man,
Who always gets the better half
Of ev'rything she can.
She always gets the better half
Of all with which we part,
And never fails to get the whole
Of our confiding heart.
Altho' she brought first woe to man
(And hence she got her name)
Deny the fact whoever can,
The Devil was to blame.
And thus you see the reason why
She's always prone to call
Her husband by old Satan's name
In ev'ry family brawl.
But ah! God bless their loving hearts!
We'll let them have their way,
Provided it shall correspond
With what we do and say.

After delivering the foregoing toast my best girl became chagrined, and when I visited her next she said, in the language of the Scriptures: "Get thee hence behind me, Satan." "Depart, ye worker of iniquity, I never knew you." I became "she-grined" and departed, after which I broke out in this strain, which, however, did not strain me much:

Oh, for an angel true
To bid my sorrows fly,
To calm my soul and then renew
The youthful joys gone by.

I soon became sorry and hoped that she had, and wanted to kiss and make up, so I sent her this:

Had I the power of Cupid fair
On wings of thought to ride,
I'd tread the wavy realms of air
And worship at thy side.
I'd lay my soul's consuming fire
Near by thy heart of stone:
Its warmth of love and strong desire
Would make thee all my own.
But since such power to me's denied
I must contented be
To let my thoughts on breezes ride
And take my heart to thee.
So when at eve you take a stroll
Through shades of sighing trees,
By babbling brooks or grassy knolls,
Please listen to the breeze.
For when the sun's last scattering rays
In golden clouds I see,
Like thy sweet smile of other days,
It makes me think of thee.
Then to the breeze I whisper low
The longings of my soul,
And bid it onward quickly go
To meet thee on thy stroll.

As the passing breeze in the sighing trees
Still sings for its home like the shell for its sea,
So doth my heart, when we're apart,
Still longingly, piningly sigh on for thee.

But one thought more I would express
Before these lines I close,—
Perhaps your mind may half-way guess,—
Your heart already knows.
One thing I'd ask, Oh, yes, I would,
But still I never can,—
Altho' I've tried I never could,—
I'm such a bashful man.

I did not receive an answer soon; so I wrote her this to make her feel bad:

Beware, I say, of girls so gay,
With eyes of heavenly blue,
Tho' they may pray both night and day
They can be false as well as true.

There comes o'er me a sad, strange spell
That bids me speak a last farewell,
Farewell, my friend, farewell to you,
The one I loved and thought so true.
Time proves thou wert not true to me,—
No more I'll waste my love on thee.
Henceforth we'll meet as strangers meet;
The hopes which made my joys complete
Are now replaced by sad regret
That calls up vows I would forget.
Forget them, yes, 'tis hard to do,—
I fain would still believe thee true,
But "The truth itself is not believed
From one who often has deceived."

This was answered by an invitation to her wedding.
I then moralized and went into sack-cloth and ashes, and soon the following came forth as advice:

WOMAN'S MISSION.

The angel which God gave to man
That led him first to vice
Just when Life's course sweetly began
She lost him Paradise.
And by that loss he came to dwell
In sorrow from his birth,—
To live and die and go to hell
On leaving this old earth.
But thanks to God that she can share
The sorrows life has given,
And by her patience love and prayer
Can help him back to heaven.

Then I wrote :

A FOOLISH FANCY.

There is a form of tender love
That grows from foolish fancy,
That changes with each changing moon
And lives on things romancy.
That love is like a transient flower
That blooms to fade away,
That wastes its sweetness and its power
Then passes to decay.
It leaves behind no single trace
But that from which it grew.
Perhaps a mem'ry of its grace
With those that first it knew.
Perhaps with some a sad regret
That it was ever born,
Who try all vainly to forget
The piercings of its thorn.
Don't trust such love by which to wed ;
It fades away too quickly,
And those whose hearts by it are led
Will sow their sorrows thickly.
But trust that love which ever lasts,—
That man's full heart expresses,
Which we may plant by judgment's hand
And feed on fond caresses.

Being in the world without a sweetheart is indeed a sad thing, and calls up many sad thoughts of loneliness; such thoughts as doubtless Cato had when he contemplated the "Soul's Immortality." Such are the lonely thoughts that came to me, and hence this piece :

THE SOUL'S LONGING.

Whence comes this endless longing,
It seems will never cease,
That robs our lives of pleasure
And steals away our peace;
That fills our hearts with anguish
And blights our hopes with care,
And makes us long for something—

We know not what nor where?
Methinks it is the longing
Of this, our lonely soul,
Still seeking for one kindred
Its longing to control.
Still seeking for some spirit,
Its counterpart below,
To make its joys all perfect,
Its hopes to share and know.
No mind can be created
Without some thought in view;
No soul can be contented
Without some work to do;
No life can e'er be happy
Without some wants attained;
No soul is ever perfect
Without some conquest gained;
No heart can e'er be peaceful
That wanders here alone,—
'T will never cease that pining
For love it cannot own.
And hence that endless longing
For something good and true,—
For some sweet heart to help us
In all we think and do.
For real, endless pleasure
Ne'er comes to any heart
Until it makes an equipoise
With some true counterpart.
And that which meets man's longing,—
The best that God has given,—
Is but a Christian woman
To help him back to heaven.
Tho' some may waste their sweetness
On fading things of earth.
And gain some passing pleasure
In hours of empty mirth:
Such love can ne'er be lasting
To this our longing heart,
For when we've learned it strongest
Fate bids us sadly part.
Just see the gloating miser

That loves the glittering gold,
When all his days are numbered
His life to Satan sold,
No hope nor joy is left him,
His love brings naught but pain,
Because his life is wasted
In love for earthly gain.
But see the sturdy Christian,
Whose heart on God is set,
Who's conquered every trouble
In life which he has met.
Such lofty, noble conduct,
-Such earnest, faithful love,
Our God will not let perish,
But gather all above.

Then I met another girl, a sweet angel that charmed
me at first sight, hence—

SOUL HARMONY.

Friends often ask this question strange,
Why do we love each other?
Why don't our hearts prefer to change
And daily hunt another?
Why do we meet with some each day,
And when we part forever
Not even think to kindly say
'Tis sad our hearts must sever?
Yet now and then we meet a face
That binds us firmly to it:
We know not why it has such grace
But at first sight we knew it.
We know their eyes are not so bright,
Their face is not so winning,
But still they wear for us a light
That gives our love beginning.
We know their voice, while not so sweet,
Will never fail to charm us:
And when our heart grows cold complete
They never fail to warm us.
It seems as if we've met before,
As if we knew each other:

On some far distant spirit shore
We knew and loved each other.
There springs at once a love-like thrill
As if old friends were meeting,
Long said good-byes seem lingering still
To gladden this new greeting.

MAN'S MISSION.

Oh, if man's life is centered
Upon some noble work,
If he has learned his duty
And never dares to shirk,
If he has learned his power
And never aims too high,
But meets all things with patience
And simply says "I'll try,"
If then he sums his courage
With all his earnest might,
To do his plainest duty
Because he thinks it's right;
If with some noble woman,
His true and faithful wife,
They strive for some great purpose
And lead a Christian life;
The sad hearts they can gladden,
The gloom they can dispel
No mind on earth alone can reckon,
Great God alone can tell.

Oh, noble thoughts that make me glad,
They keep down passions strong,
They keep my heart from growing sad,
And shield my soul from wrong.

THE WATCH BELLS.

Slowly now the bells are tolling,
 Ringing out the dying year,
Like a sad death knell enrolling
 All the deeds of life's career.
Bringing duties long neglected
 To our calm, regretful gaze,
Golden moments we rejected
 Growing into misspent days.
Calling up the ghosts departed
 Of deep sorrow and regret,
Which the faint and lonely hearted
 Vainly try still to forget.
Calling up the hopes we've cherished,
 Vows we made months ago,
All along our pathways perished
 Like our pleasures here below.
Farewell, days, farewell with sorrow,
 This, the fleetest of all years,
May there dawn a bright tomorrow
 Blotting out these silent tears.
While the years grow dim and distant
 Youthful sorrows pass away,
But the joys of childhood linger
 Just to make us bright and gay,
May such mem'ries 'round us cluster,
 Guarding us from future strife,
Shedding still a radiant luster,
 Through the years of coming life.
Sleigh bells ring a merry chorus,
 Wedding bells give happy chimes,
Bringing joyous feelings o'er us,
 Mem'ries sweet of pleasant times.
Well it is these bells are ringing
 Sweetly, sadly, as they should,
Resolutions yearly bringing
 For a life of greater good.
May this year, tho' passing fleet,
 Find us watching, praying still;
May our duties grow the sweeter
 While we do the Master's will.

ROSEBUDS.

“Come, gather rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is swiftly flying,
And those that bloom so sweet today
Tomorrow will be dying.”
’Tis but the song a sad refrain
Of flowers that sweetly bloom,
The emblems true of joy and pain
From cradle to the tomb.
A rosebud fair of brightest hues
Just opening to the sun,
Kissed by the early morning dews,
Its mission just begun;
To scatter fragrance to the breeze,
To gladden mourning hearts,
The minds of worried ones to ease,
And pleasure to impart.

Wear on your face a great broad smile,
And keep your soul chock-full of laughter;
Though you have hell on earth awhile,
I pray you will have none hereafter.

POOR WOMAN.

Poor woman is an angel fair
Who doesn’t chew, nor even swear,
And hence must cultivate her graces;
Tho’ she may paint on canvas well,—
It may be wrong, but still I’ll tell,—
They paint much better on their faces.
She can do much when she’s inclined,
Yes, fret and fume and vent her mind,
And drive poor man to acts of treason;
She does this magic, mystic part
By charms of person and of heart,
And not by cultivated reason.

THE CLUB HUSBAND.

(A Toast for the W. M. M. Club.)

Oh, here's to our man who does what he can
To help us club women along;
He sends us to the club, eats predigested grub,
And never does think we do wrong.

He sings lullaby if baby should cry,
Or writes, if needed, a toast;
He furnishes cash, tho' fed on cold hash,
But sometimes we give him a "roast."

But he takes it so nice the roast doth suffice
To give us great arguing power;
His voice is not heard, we get the last word,
For we are the talkers of the hour.

He patches his pants and gives us a chance
To fill the great places we've won;
He wears a long coat that his friends cannot note
The coarse needle work he has done.

He heeds all our wishes, from washing the dishes
To sweeping or building the fires;
A husband like this should give us all bliss
And help us to gain our desires.

Some think it quite funny we need so much money
For clubs and ladies who preside;
You need never doubt it, we can't do without it;
A husband is needed "on the side."

P. S.—This is a joke.

A MUSICAL ROMANCE.

“Down where the cotton blossoms grow”
And “Swanee Ribber” waters flow,
The “Daisy” and the “Violets” bloom
To bathe the breeze with sweet perfume.
The Marchel Neil there proudly grows,
By far “the sweetest flower that blows.”
All Nature wears “May Morning” charm,
With “Sweet Marie” “Down on the Farm.”
“She was a maiden fair and lucky,”
And “She was bred in old Kentucky.”
Her heart was light and free from care
Until she met “Robin Adair”
Upon “The Bridge” at dewy eve,
When lovers’ eyes can best deceive.
He sang in accents “Sweet and low”
“Loves’ old sweet song” all lovers know.
“Oh, promise me” your “Answer” true.
“Because I love you,” none but “You”;
“I’ll leave my happy home for you”
I’ll live for thee, admire no other.
So now “Just break the news to mother.”
The gay and festive life they led
Soon drove sweet Marie to her bed,
Rheumatic pains wrecked her young life;
“Love’s Golden Dream” brought her but strife.
He cried, “What’s life and love made for?”
“A Warrior Bold” he went to war.
While “Dixie” cheered him on he fought,
Surcease from sorrow’s all he sought.
“Just as the sun went down” he fell
With “Comrades” in that bloody dell;
“Star Spangled Banners” o’er him waved.
The wounded man at last was saved.
“Good News from Home” we gladly tell,
The MARLIN WELL has made her well.
She went to nurse him back to health,
“In Sweet September” Love and Pride
Made her his true and lawful bride.
“He was a Prince” without renown,
Her love made him a princely crown.

AN OLD MAID'S SOLILOQUY.

I'm thirty, I'm thirty, I'm thirty today,
And that's why I'm lonely reflecting this way;
Old Time and the school-room have used up my life
And kept some good husband from winning a wife.
Life's duties enthrall me, no time left to pause
And tamper with Cupid in his worthy cause.
There's Latin to teach them—a beautiful class—
But some are so stupid I fear they won't pass.
There's work and there's toil each day in the week;
When Saturday comes I scarcely can speak.
And then I must visit, or mend up my clothes,
And wash out or darn out my week's wear of hose.
With all these dire duties I'm not once afraid,
But now come the duties of being an old maid.
That term is quite hackneyed—don't like it a bit—
A spinster is nicer—I think I'll use it.

* * * * *

When, lo! there's a knocking—a crowd at the door:
So many glad spinsters were ne'er seen before.
“We come with a welcome to lend you a hand
And make you a member of our gay spinster band.
So let us make merry and thank the good Lord
That we are not trammelled by Hymen's strong cord.
We teach and we toil but five days in the week
With some housewife's darling that looks like a freak.
We come and we go, and we do as we please,
With no man to boss us and rob us of ease.
And tho' we are spinsters we're glad and we're gay;
We'll help smile the troubles of married folks away.”
So here's to the spinsters, oh, long may they live
With cheer and good pleasure to keep and to give.

REFLECTIONS.

Oh, what is life that man should live,
What lasting pleasures can it give
To cheer us through this vale of sorrow ?
'Tis mostly pain and trouble here,
Each smile is followed by a tear,
And not one promise of tomorrow.

In ev'ry walk of passing life
There is that endless, ceaseless strife,
That takes man's strength to fullest measure :
That mad, wild rush for paltry pelf
That makes us all forget one's self,
And robs our life of all true pleasure.

But he who for himself employs
His time and mind and ne'er enjoys
That sweet, unselfish joy of giving
The cheerful words of hope and love
Which point from earth to heaven above,
Has missed that greatest joy of living.

For life should be one glad, sweet song,
Its sweetest strains we should prolong.
Tho' minor chords are sometimes given :
They sanctify the saddened heart
And each chord gives its lasting part
To that soul-song we'll sing in heaven.

* * * * *

This may sound like a misanthrope
Who lost his love and buried hope,
And has no faith in that great Giver,
But such sad thoughts come through my brain
When I feel bad and must complain

Because I've got a bad old liver,
But life is now one song of fun,
I feel like hugging ev'ryone,—
I've longed for health and now I've got her ;
I feel so very glad and gay,—
This world is like the month of May,
Three weeks I've used that Marlin water.

A VISIT TO THE OLD HOME.

(Reflections on Boyhood.)

I view again the sacred soil
My youthful feet did tread,
Which calls up days of irksome toil
And cuss words I first said.
Tho' poets sing of sweetest charms
Of happy, barefoot boys,
Who live upon the country farms
In free and endless joys;
Yes, horny-handed sons of toil,
Who follow up the plow,
Who cut the weeds from fertile soil
And pump the muley cow;
He chases o'er the stony way
As if he couldn't feel,
And does a hundred chores each day
With a stonebruise on his heel.
He's out again at early morn,
And urges on his dog
To chase from out the growing corn
The razor-backed old hog.
He dines on nuts and pecans green,
And hunts each time it rains;
That night enacts a warlike scene
With full-grown gastric pains.
This barefoot boy, who toils all day
With briar-torn foot and shin,
It's hard to see, I'm frank to say,
Where fun to him comes in.
Full well do I remember now
The angry sighs and groans
I gave while wrestling with a plow
'Mid sturdy stumps and stones.
And every old familiar spot
Recalls to mind again
The pastime pleasures once forgot,—
The joys that might have been.
Yes, twice each day I pumped the cows,
And hunted every rain,
Or planted out potato slips,

And never dared complain.
I made a milker; 'twas a boon,
To change my work to play;
The kicking cow jumped o'er the moon
And I saw stars that day.
On Saturdays I went to mill,
Three miles I rode alone;
The sack fell off,—I waited till
Some neighbor put it on.
Sundays I rode a braying mule
To see the neighbor girls,
And with my hat I kept them cool,
While sorghum stuck their curls.
Such were the joys I'll ne'er forget
Of childhood's happy hours,
In memory dear, they linger yet
Like lovers' faded flowers.
And when there were no stumps to burn
I had some hours my own,
They let me gladly work the churn,
Or turn the old grindstone.

A LOVE LETTER WRITTEN ON AN EMPTY STOMACH.

Just as Aurora tinges the eastern sky with dawn,
Just as early chanticleers are crowing for break of morn,
Just as the morning star is fading, losing its silvery gleam,
Just as you are dreaming, dreaming your last sweet dream,
Just as the oil mill whistles, sounding its mighty blast
Like the trumpet of Gabriel that shall wake us all at last;
Just as I'm softly musing, trying to read my heart,
A thousand notions thronging I cannot make depart,
Just as I broach the question and try to write sublime
And tell my heartfelt longing, my courage fails each time.
My thoughts all change to nothing; I do not know myself,
Nor do I know that maiden, that devilish little elf.
I know I think I love her, but still I can not tell,—
It may be pangs of hunger that breakfast would dispel.
It may be early rising, the morning bright and clear,
The air so cool and bracing, that makes me feel so queer.
And hence I'll finish later when appetite is quelled,
If all these funny feelings by breakfast aren't dispelled.

Let's keep alive that spark of love
Which God to us has given,
Which makes this earth like heaven above
To which the saints have striven.

It drives away a world of woe,
And all imagined sorrow,
And makes its victims feel and know
There is a bright tomorrow.

It fills each heart with radiant hope
And makes each soul grow stronger,
It broadens out life's narrow scope
When doubtings rule no longer.

Oh, let us see that such remains
To fill our hearts with gladness;
A mutual love that's free from stains
Will banish all life's sadness.

So then we'll love and trust always,
And never doubt each other.
Thus sweetly, swiftly pass our days
Without a question further.

BENEDICTINE ODE.

Come hear me muse; come hear me muse,
Because I'm newly wed,
Don't think that I shall change my views
And wish that thou wert dead.
For now it is I'd sing a song
In sweetest words of love
That angels might those strains prolong
With echoes from above.
The thoughts of love I once did think
Have now come to my life,
The angels painted by my ink
Are all my darling wife.
Each sighing breeze that gently blows
Brings thoughts of love to me,
Each laughing brook that onward flows
Will make me think of thee.
Each chirping bird that gladly sings
Its song of joy elate
To welcome back the coming Spring
And woo its wonted mate,
And all the flowers that sweetly bloom,
Each dipped in morning dew,
Now greet me with their fresh perfume
That makes me think of you.
All nature seems to gladly sing
That song of joy the same,
Each sound to me doth truly bring
A thought of thy sweet name.
Oh, how I long with deep heartache
Once more thy face to greet,
For naught but thee and love can make
My joys on earth complete.
A love for thee and what thou art,
A pure, undying love,
My soul's desire and all my heart
For thee and heaven above.
So may this love forever last
Which God to us has given,
That when our days on earth are past
"Twill bless us both in heaven.

THE FIRST BIRTHDAY.

June 2, 1906.

Welcome this day, my darling son,
You've reached the first milestone,
Life's joys and sorrows just begun
To you are still unknown.

Tho' pain at times has racked your frame
With sickness since you're born,
Your parents both would rather claim
For each instead a thorn.

For who but parents half can feel
The fond parental joys,
The matchless love that doth appeal
For their own girls and boys.

The binding power that thrills our hearts
When first a child is given,
Its blood and life of us a part—
A treasure sent from heaven.

A present sent that we must rear
To manhood's matchless power,
God's name to know, and to revere
His will each passing hour.

And may the ever-present smile
That beautifies our boy
Foretell the goodness all the while
That fills his heart with joy.

And may he grow in goodly things
Of mind and body, too.
We'll hope and pray that each day brings
God's power to see him through,

That he may bless this world below
And help dispel its sorrow,
Relieve the pain and ceaseless woe
That human forms must borrow.



John Waller Torbett, Jr.
Youngest Disciple of His Father's Gospel of Sunshine.

A HAPPY HOME.

Oh, man with wife and babe and home,
How canst thou care or dare to roam
 Away from such a place as this?
When western hills obscure the sun
And daily toil is gladly done,
 What else could give you half such bliss?

How canst thou ever dare to think
Of Bacchus and the maddening drink?
 For such to wander out alone.
These fill your life with deepening care
And sink your soul in dark despair
 Away from light and love your own.

What else on earth could hope to bring
The matchless joys that poets sing
 Of home and all its rarest pleasure?
To romp with prattling baby there
While wife sings 'way life's ev'ry care,
 Gives joy that words can never measure.

Oh, wife, you have your duties, too.
The kindly acts that you should do,
 To hold man to his nuptial vows;
The tidy dress, the constant smile
Which should adorn you all the while,
 Your home with light and love endows.

Oh, wife and babe and happy home,
How can man dare or care to roam,
 At eve away from joys like this!
The light and love which they can give
Make life alone worth while to live,
 A foretaste of that heavenly bliss.

MY DECALOGUE.

How to Get Well and Stay Well.

No. 1. Be cheerful. Keep the corners of your mouth turned up; it will help you and your neighbors, too.

No. 2. Don't give nor take "hot air," but breathe deeply and slowly plenty of fresh air day and night. Keep one window up in your bedroom.

No. 3. Avoid all draughts, except bank drafts. The skin is the great organ of elimination and must be kept clean and active.

No. 4. Eat meats only once daily. Eat slowly, chew well; but eschew all but plain, simple food. Most people eat too much.

No. 5. Drink much **pure** cold liquids between meals **only**, to cleanse the blood and fatten the tissues, if you are not already too fat.

No. 6. Be clean and sanitary in all you eat and drink, and thus avoid disease germs. Don't eat raw fruit with decayed spots.

No. 7. Keep a clear conscience, an active liver, and don't worry. Treat others as you would be treated yourself.

No. 8. Sleep seven or eight hours each twenty-four. Avoid the bites of mosquitoes and flies; they give you fever.

No. 9. The brain is the central telephone station; don't send out messages of worry and anxiety to poison your nerves, but send cheerful, hopeful, life-giving thoughts. The mind and will can and should rule the body; hence go to sleep each night with this firm determination: "I will awake feeling better."

No. 10. Come to Marlin once each year and take a scientific "boil-out" and get a new lease on life.

THE NEW WOMAN.

*Toast delivered at a banquet given to the Federation of Women's Clubs at Marlin April 18, 1904.

New Woman—what a beautiful subject, with so many living illustrations before us. Of course, I would not have the effrontery to presume that any of the fair ladies here tonight are old. The new woman has long been the mark for sarcastic jests of dyspeptic husbands who married for money and failed to get it, as well as from old, disappointed bachelors, who failed to get the money or the woman, either. The new woman has also been charged, unjustly, I think, with usurping man's authority, with shifting the responsibility of the home and the nursery upon his shoulders, and even assuming a portion of his time-honored wearing apparel. But in their defense I would gladly say that I have never missed any of my clothes except at the hands of the washer-woman, who even gets all of my old suits and hats; and I have never had to sit on the back porch and rock a cradle and sing a lullaby awaiting a club wife's return, simultaneously with the setting of the sun into the lap of the ocean, and had the rose-tinted clouds of the western sky blush at our performances.

Some years before I wed
I tho't clubs made for men.
Of women then I boldly said
To join a club's a sin.
I said new woman calls herself
The "better half" of man.
And always gets the better half
Of everything she can.
She always gets the better half
Of all with which we part.
And never fails to get the whole
Of our confiding heart.
And tho' she brought first woe to men,
And hence she got her name,
Deny the fact whoever can,
The Devil was to blame.

And thus you see the reason why
She's ever prone to call
Her husband by old Satan's name
In every family brawl.
But, ah! God bless their loving hearts,
We let them have their way,
Provided it shall correspond
With what we do and say.

But, ladies and gentlemen, I have had a change of heart, a change of life, since writing the above toast on "Man's Better Half." I have long since learned, tho' some can't get along without her, but say mean things about her, still all the world, both great and small, can't get along without her.

And tact is taught in woman's clubs,
Each lady here doth show it;
They've learned the art of ruling men,
And never let them know it.

As fashions have changed and changed again, so have the duties and customs of both men and women varied with the passing years. Our grandmothers and great-grandmothers—they were the old women of the old style—from necessity and not from choice, spent the long-drawn evenings with cards—making rolls of cotton to be spun into thread. The inventive genius of man has removed that necessity, and now the new club woman deftly deals the flinch and euchre cards and passes away those same hours more pleasantly.

The old woman sat by the pine-knot fire knitting socks for the soldiers, while the new woman sits by the glowing grate with a copy of "Shattuck's Rules of Order" in her lap, with some fancy work in her hands, and solemnly **knits** her brow solving the great civic and social problems of modern clubdom.

The old woman kept up the busy buzz of the spinning-wheel and the monotonous click of the loom making cottonades, while the new woman spins a fancy cord of ownership around our necks, and looms up before our admiring eyes with a \$20 hat and a new silk dress.

And as she tips the ivory keys
Adept in music's art,
So does she play with self-same ease
Upon the heart-strings of our hearts.

“If the heart of man is depressed with cares,
The mist is dispelled when woman appears.
Woman, thou loveliest gift that here below
Man can receive or Providence bestow.”

Although she was created after man, man ever since her creation has always been after her. Altho' he led her to the altar she has ever since that time led him captive at her will, queen of his heart and of his home. And when she chooses to club him with such a beautiful club occasion as this; and not with the fire poker or rolling pin, as some of our newspapers would have us believe is done in other States; we cannot do otherwise than bubble over with gratitude and admiration, and exclaim with fervor, “Where she leads us, we will follow.”

It is to her matchless and persevering foresight and thoughtfulness we owe our greatest joys in both public and private life.

In union there is strength. Concerted club action accomplishes much, while individual and divided efforts bring discord and defeat. So I propose that we drink to the health of the New Woman.

Long may she live and never grow old,
And be able to give instead of a scold
Kind words of cheer and wholesome advice,
As you have done here so exceedingly nice.

REFLECTIVE REVERIES.

On Monument Bluff, La Grange, Texas, September 8th, 1906.

'Tis sweet at times to be alone
 Away from work and care,
'Mid ancient forests stately grown
 To catch the music there:
God's voice through Nature speaks, it seems,
To weave the poet's fairest dreams.

'Tis joy to view the varied tints
 On myriad leaves that sway,
Where light and shadow each imprints
 Its own mysterious way:
And breathe the song that zephyrs sigh,
Perfumed by flowers that soon must die.

'Tis sweetly sad to catch the tones
 Which growing trees all give,
Where restless wind forever moans
 Through dying leaves that live:
Such scenes arouse beyond control
A thousand thoughts within my soul.

The smiling sunshine and the rain
 Each gives its magic power,
The finger prints of both remain
 On ev'ry leaf and flower:
All breathe the same life-giving breath,—
Like us to fade away in Death.

There comes o'er me a feeling strange
 Like spirits standing 'round!
This sacred soil of old La Grange,—
 This Mier burying ground:
This hallowed spot where patriots rest
By Nature's beauty greatly blest.

Near ancient cliffs that Time has grooved
With language all its own,
Which Nature's laurels have improved
With ivy overgrown:
Like Mizpah, may this pile of stones
Forever guard these mould'ring bones.

Far down below the river flows,
Murmuring on its way.
Red like the blood of bold heroes
Had stained its sands one day;
Long weeping willows line each side,
Mourners of Nature, 'twould seem,
Bathing their leaves in the turbulent tide,
Soothing the sorrowing stream.

'Tis well to seek such solitude
And rest at times, it seems;
O'er life and all its changes brood,
Reviving youthful dreams,—
The hopes and loves we once enjoyed
From baser passions all devoid.

Such dreams arouse a new desire
And give a new Ideal,
And make our wearied hearts aspire
To change it all to real.
With rested mind we gladly yearn
To better work soon to return.



SUNDAY AT THE OLD HOME.

Once more I view my childhood's home
And think of days spent there;
Once more alone through wildwoods roam
'Neath trees so brown and bare:
Once more in Nature's solitude
I drink in her sweet song;
In silence there I deeply brood
O'er life and all its wrong.
Once more on leafy beds I lie
This sunny Sunday morn,
And think of days and years gone by
And hopes still left forlorn.
I sit beside the self-same brook,
Beneath the same oak tree,
Where years ago I read a book
That gave new hopes to me.
Around me flits the chirping bird
And o'er me sails the crow;
The same glad sounds I oftentimes heard
In years of long ago.
But now these scenes bring thoughts anew
And all seems dimly strange,
For Time has brought another view
With all its endless change.
I view again the old arm-chair
Wherein my mother sat,
Beneath it lies without a care
Another sleeping cat,
Another dog fawns at my knees,
He bears my old dog's name,
And both enjoy that same old ease
And look to be the same.
But all is changed that looks the same,
'Tis but the same old place,
And new things bear the same old name
That Time cannot efface.
Each name like faded flowers brings
A fragrance sweet that stays,
A memory true that ever clings
To childhood's happy days.

THERE'S A LIGHT IN THE WINDOW OF HEAVEN.

(A Song.)

There's a light in the window of heaven,
 'Tis shining for you and for me;
To our souls in this life it is given
 As a guide o'er this billowy sea.
Tho' we wander in pathways forbidden,
 And our souls become darkened with sin,
Yet our lives from that light are ne'er hidden,
Still it shines for the vilest of men.

There's the light of the mother departed,
 Who from earth many years has been gone;
Tho' she left many friends broken-hearted,
 Yet she said by her life "Follow on."
Still the light of her life is a pleasure,
 Tho' we miss her so much from our side,
That dear light should give joy beyond measure,
 For it points to her Christ as our guide.

There's a light in this world all around us,
 From the loved ones who've gone on before,
And the ties of that love which here bind us
 Will united there be evermore;
And our Savior's the light and the beauty
 In the home He prepared up above,
And He lights up our pathway of duty
 With the light of His beautiful love.

Chorus:

There's a light shining bright
 From the home of our friends gone above.
Look today! don't delay!
 'Tis the light of Christ's infinite love.

DEATH'S CALL.

(A Song.)

Surely but sadly must come the call,—
Death's dark angel will claim us all.
Sooner or later will gather each friend
Waiting and watching the last sad end.
Life and its duties for us will close;
Naught will remain but the breath of the rose,—
Memories dear with the friends we knew,
Of the kind deeds we chanced to do.

Refrain:

Slowly and sadly she breathed her last;
Upward to heaven her glances cast;
Faintly she whispered a last good-bye,
"I'm going to heaven at once when I die."

Such were the words of a sister now gone,
Asking her friends to follow her on,
Leaving the joys of life here below,
All of its sorrow, sickness and woe,—
Leaving the dear ones she loved for years,
Bidding good-bye through rainbows of tears,
Rainbow of promise, of faith and love,
That reaches from earth to heaven above.

(Refrain.)

How is your conscience? Oh, how is your soul?
How is your name on heaven's bright roll?
How is your life in ways you have trod?
Do you work for right, for heaven and God?
Are you prepared to meet Death's call?—
Surely some day 'twill come to us all;
May you live so when life's work is done
You can then say as said this dear one:

(Refrain.-

THE PATENT MEDICINE CRAZE.

The temperance band all o'er the land
Is joined against old rum,
And preachers all must heed the call,
They cannot fail to come.

Both night and day they work and pray
To down this mighty wrong,
But for fatigue the temperance league
Oft drink Peruna strong.

They never think that what they drink
Is just mean whiskey, too,
Effects the same, another name
To catch such folks as you.

The daily press I must confess
Is very much to blame;
For troubles small possessed by all
Are given a scary name.

The human mind is much inclined
To take up what it reads,
And so each day in bold array
On glowing "ads" it feeds.

That feeling tired is soon acquired
That worry often brings,
And soon with ease your mind disease
Brings sev'ral other things.

So when you think you need to drink
Some advertised "cure-all"
To soothe your brain and kill your pain,—
Its power is alcohol.

And so it's tried and verified
To help in ev'ry strife;
'Twill cure each ache if you'll but take
The stuff the rest of life.

SPRING'S A-COMING.

Mocking birds again are singing,
Blushing roses sweetly swinging
In the balmy perfumed air;
Drowsy bees begin their humming,
And we know that Spring's a-coming,—
Nature's smiling everywhere.

Nature decked in all its glory
Seems to teach that matchless story
Of our youthful happy days,—
Hope and love seem fresher, brighter,
Sorrows vanished, joys all lighter.
Down fond mem'ry's misty ways.

Pleasant mem'ries come a-thronging,
Fill our hearts with ardent longing
For the joys of long ago;
Fill our souls with ceaseless wishing,
Make us want to go a-fishing
In the creek we used to know.

Near to Nature's new life thriving,
Back from Death each thing reviving,
Comes this soulful deep reflection:
When man's changeful course has ended,
And his form with dust has blended,
Then shall come his resurrection.



THE THINGS IN LIFE THAT I MOST FEAR.

A Toast.

You see I am a timid man,
But then I'll do the best I can.
The things in life that I most fear
May seem to some a little queer,
But then I have my reasons strong,—
Experience teaches I'm not wrong.

The first I fear 's a woman's smile
That seeks some promise to beguile.
I know 'twill rob me of my rest
If I refuse her small request,
For if bewitching smiles should fail
With other weapons she'll assail.
With dewdrop tears pressed from her eyes
She'll look on me with great surprise.
Those diamond teardrops sparkle there,
Her face lights up just twice as fair,
And then she grasps my hand serene—
"Oh, dear, how can you be so mean!"
If these entreaties I refuse
One other weapon she will use.
It is the worst, the strongest yet,
The one that man can ne'er forget—
The one of which no songs are sung—
It is a woman's angry tongue.
If once it starts, in little while
I wish I'd yielded to her smile.
She never lets me have my say
Until I let her have her way.
So then it's best to yield at first
Unless you wish to get the worst.

There's one thing more that I do fear.
(It's not intended as a sneer.)
I fear some day I may get sick.
They'll call some would-be surgeon quick,
And if I've got a gastric pain,
Before I've time to half explain,
Or know what he has gone about.

He'll cut my good appendix out.
Or, since I wear no golden spur.
The surgeon will at once infer,
As many do now I suppose,
There's bony spurs within my nose,
And then before I've time to shriek
He'll ruin my pretty Roman beak.

I've read that germs lurk everywhere,
For mortal man they set a snare,
In all we eat and all we drink;
'Tis germs of thought that make us think;
On ruby lips and rosy cheek,
On everything that man would seek.
You see I'm in such mortal dread
I almost wish that I was dead.

You can always surely tell
When one's liver is working well;
For then he wears a great big smile,
He jokes and jollies all the while.
But if one's liver is out of fix,
It seems his stomach's full of bricks.
The smile is changed into a frown,
His under lip goes hanging down.
The days and hours pass by so long,
And all the world with him goes wrong.
The thing he needs for all such ills
Is some of my good liver pills.



MY VACATION IN SWEET SEPTEMBER.

Weary and worn with the toils of life,
Tired in mind and soul,
Ready to end this ceaseless strife
This side the longed-for goal,
Each year I gladly hie away
From city and thronging mart,
Back to the home of another day
For peace of mind and heart.

Back to the home I used to know,
'Midst hills and fertile farms,
Recalling the joys of long ago,
Of childhood's matchless charms.
Back to the forest's friendly shade
Beside the babbling brook,
By winding paths, through glen and glade.
Each old familiar nook.

Back to my aged parents there,
Down by the old fireside,
To hear each morn and eve their prayer
That God may help and guide.
My soul seems stirred by mystic powers
As thronging mem'ries fly;
A fragrant welcome from the flowers.
The nodding trees all sigh.

The whisp'ring winds sing soft and low.
The busy bee's all hum.
The chanticleers more gladly crow.
It seems, because I've come.
While rapture fills my throbbing heart.
I wander here and there
And all my sorrows soon depart.
My soul is free from care.

I sleep and dream and dream again
Of childhood's joys to me.
And seem as pure and sweet as then
From care and sorrow free.

Why should these simple rustic scenes
Bring peace and quietude,
And childish mem'ries be the means
Of such a restful mood?

They bring us from the busy marts
And all its bustling strife
To hope and faith and loving hearts,—
The pure and simple life.
They bring us back free to rejoice
In former paths we've trod,
To hear again glad Nature's voice
Near to great Nature's God.

* * * * *

APPENDIX—(If you are afraid it may give you
appendicitis, cut it out.)

I've spent three days a-running wild
Through woodland, glade and glen,
In deed and thought just like a child,
I've lived youth o'er again.
I've dirt and patches on my clothes,
(And red-bugs, too, I fear),
And sunburnt spots upon my nose.
To last another year.

THE HYPOCHONDRIAC—THE HYPO-ED MAN.

I've seen some folks always complain,—
But still they look quite well,—
They always have some ache or pain
Of which they wish to tell;
The sleepless nights which they have had,
The tortures they've endured,—
No other one was half so bad,
No such was ever cured,

Their talk each time you chance to meet
Is of their numerous ills;
They cannot rest, they cannot eat,
Nor pay their doctor's bills.

They glibly tell a great long string
Of doctors' choice commands.
Their stomach won't retain a thing
On it but their two hands.

And so their troubles ever change,—
They've had each one you name.
The cause they give is very strange,—
The doctor was to blame.
And so they bore you half to death
And talk you both quite pale:
And never stop to take a breath
And let you tell your tale.

Such folks as this I always tell
They need a little change,
(And so do I) then charge them well,—
Of course they think it strange.
And then I make them let me talk,
I tell them how they feel;
Each day they need a great long walk
Before the breakfast meal.

They always think their liver's wrong,
I swear 'tis not the case.
They need to sing some happy song
And smile all o'er their face.
We all must drink life's bitter cup;
'Twill last a little while
If you'll but turn mouth corners up
And wear a great broad smile.

Then eat the same amount each day,
And never fret nor scold:
It is the sure and only way
To keep from growing old.
And you must take some better care
And talk some less each day,
And breathe in more of good fresh air.

* * * * *

They're better right away.

ABSENCE.

“Absence makes the heart grow fonder,”
’Tis a question we should ponder,
And in silence oft I wander

With my fancy through that theme.
Does it make Love’s passion stronger
And each waiting day seem longer?
Is it but a poet’s dream?

Such a thought can do no wronging
To the heart that’s always longing
For the mem’ries that come thronging
Of the joys of loved ones gone.
Such sweet memories of pleasure
Which the heart should gladly treasure,—
Guarding comfort ’round it drawn.

Absence brings a deep reflecting
On the duties we’re neglecting
And the joys that we’re rejecting
With the ones we love so dear.
Oft the joys for which we’ve striven
And the hope which God has given
Come when none but God is near.

Then all Nature smiles before us,
Starry heavens are shining o’er us,
All is joined in one glad chorus,—
Sad but sweet in solitude.
Then all selfish thoughts should perish.
And the loved ones that we cherish
Bring to mind a brighter mood.

Such reflection keeps love burning,
And inspires that ardent yearning
For the loved one’s swift returning—
Absence is no longer sought;
Then it is loved ones departed
Should return to those sad hearted
With new fondness absence taught.

JOLLYISM.

Winter's here; for Spring we're longing,
With its birds and flowers a-thronging,—
Seems we're never satisfied.
Here in Texas winter weather
Brings the seasons all together,
Nothing good for man's denied.

So don't mind the changing weather:
Keep your heart just like a feather,
Free from sorrow and from care,
And if troubles gather 'round you,
And it seems they will confound you,
Think a minute, but don't swear.

Ask the Lord that He may guide you,
Keep His promises beside you,
Then work on with all your might,
Keep your Faith forever working,
Never doubting, never shirking
Anything you think is right.

Don't be fretting; don't be pining;
Let your light always be shining
Radiant hued just like a prism.
Keep your heart forever singing
Joys along your pathway bringing,—
Good for all but rheumatism.

* * * * *

It requires something hotter,
Something like this Marlin water,
'Way down here in Texas,
Health and happiness are found:
Wintry weather never vexes,
Roses bloom the whole year 'round.

A ROUGH RIDER'S ROMANCE

and

THE RANCHMAN'S DAUGHTER.

We gladly tell in song and rhyme
Of deeds in Cuba done,
Of how our boys fared in that clime,
Of how they fought and won.
But gladder still we tell of this
A romance strange but true,
Of heartfelt woe and final bliss
That blessed the lives of two.
On Texas' broad expansive plains
Where flow'ry nature smiles,
A cattle king had his domains,
His ranches reached for miles.
His only daughter, young and fair,
Was sent to Gotham town
To cultivate her talents rare
That she might win renown.
While there she met a bright young man,
His name to fame well known,
A mutual love at once began.
He claimed her soon his own.
The gay and festive life they led
In fashion's mazy charm
Soon drove this maiden to her bed—
Rheumatics wrecked her form.
Faithful and true he served her still
Through hours of ceaseless pain,
Until he learned she was so ill
A cripple she'd remain.
Heart-broken man in dire despair
He joined Roosevelt's command
To find surcease from sorrow there,
Or die for this his land.
At San Juan he fought and fell,
The columns onward sped,
The news came home too sad to tell
That he was left there dead.

Heart-sore and sick back home she came,
Naught could her gloom dispel,
She heard of Marlin's matchless fame,—
Its waters made her well.

She then resolved to do some good
For those in dire distress;
She went to join the Sisterhood
To learn their tenderness.
Our wounded boys had just returned
To home and former friends,
To help the sick her great heart yearned,
O'er each she kindly bends.

In charity and patient care
She went to spend her wealth,
She found her lover wounded there
And nursed him back to health.
They soon were wed and now they claim
New life has just begun;
A thousand sick now bless the name
Of both for kindness done.

A WORD TO THE Y'S (Wise).

*

The Book records when Time began
That all was peace and pleasure;
That Mother Eve was made for man
To help consume his leisure.
Like woman now, with curious mind,
(As then there was no college)
To asking questions much inclined
She spied the Tree of Knowledge.
Like woman now, imbued with "spunk,"
When anything's denied her,
At once she made poor Adam drunk
On home-made apple cider.
Just when he thought all things were nice
And that Eve's head was level;

Alas! she lost him Paradise
 By flirting with the devil.
 So Adam's leisure soon was gone,
 From drink and fall both dizzy.
 Eve's daughters all from that time on
 Have kept us men all busy.
 The greatest power through all these years
 Since man's lamented fall
 That brought most heartache and most tears
 Has been old Alcohol.
 Though poets wrote in ancient times
 Of Bacchus and his pleasure,
 And sang their songs in sweetest rhymes
 Of wine that flowed full measure.
 The wine of life you give us here,—
 Intoxicating laughter,—
 Will fill our hearts with hope and cheer
 To meet the great hereafter.
 The sunshine of your gladsome smile
 Will always serve to cheer us.
 And though you rule us all the while,
 You make us think you fear us.
 So here's a welcome to the "Y's",—
 Eve's daughters, young and fair,
 Who fill our hearts with glad surprise
 And rob our lives of care.
 They come to form a helpful band
 To drive away our sorrow,
 To lend to us a helping hand
 And brighten each tomorrow.
 Then while your hands we gladly hold
 We'll try to do our parts,
 We'll grasp the truths which you unfold
 And try to win your hearts.
 We thank the Lord that you can share
 The sorrows life has given,
 And by your patience, love and prayer
 Can help us back to heaven.

* Toast to the "Y" branch of the W. C. T. U.

RAINY DAY REFLECTIONS.

Let ev'rybody dance
Each time you get a chance,
 And when you can't, then pray;
For it takes all kinds
To relieve our minds
 And keep us bright and gay.
Tho' the clouds may all weep
Oh, don't you lie and sleep
 And long for the better days;
Nor sit around and fuss
About a "pretty muss"
 That meets your constant gaze.

So be jolly all the while
Ever ready with a smile
 To cheer a heart that's blue;
Thus you take all your gloom
From the cradle to the tomb
 And bury it there with you.

For it has not a place
On a sun-shiny face,—
 A face that's sweet and fair;
For it does it no good
Like a smile ever would,
 But brings its lines of care,

UNCLE PETER IN CHICAGO.

I went up dere jes' fer er change
 And fer er little rest;
Chicago folks got all de change
 As Liza Jane had guessed.
I got my eyes chockful ob dust,
 My lungs plum full ob smoke,
An' come back home mos' tired to death,
 An' very nearly broke.
But oh, de wondrous sights I saw
 In dat great city dar,
Will linger in my mem'ry dear
 An' drive out many a care.
De houses reach mos' to der sky,
 De streets am paved wid brick,

Folks lib so fas' dey mos' all die
 Before dey're eber sick.
 I seed Miz Leary an' her cow
 All fixed in 'lectric light
 What raised one time dat fiery row
 An' made dat famous night,—
 She kicked de lantern o'er de fence,
 It burned up half de town;
 Tho' bof hab kicked de bucket since
 Dey still hab great renown.
 An' ev'ry one's still on de run,
 More dan two million folks,
 So busy workin' for de mun,
 No time to crack der jokes.
 But ef you mopes eroun', 'tis said,
 'Mongst folks so bery rash,
 Some liable to crack yo' head
 An' borry all yo' cash.
 So I'se come back here to de Souf,
 De rest ob life to bide.
 In spite ob weebils and de drouf
 I'se much mo' satisfied.
 De Sunny Souf is fer my race,
 Wid whites what knows us well,
 As we what keeps our proper place
 Will always gladly tell.
 I does as taught by Booker T——
 I'se learned to work my farm;
 De whites lack hones' men lack me,
 Because I does no harm.
 I would not send to white folks' schools,—
 I don' belieb in dat,
 Like some ob dem Smart Aleck fools,—
 'Case I'se a Democrat.
 I shuns de man in politics
 What's paid to mek de fight;
 I reads De News an' learns der tricks,
 Den votes what I tinkt right.
 Tho' times be hard, de good ole News
 Says "'Versify yo' craps,"
 Since den I neber has de blues.
 An' neber has my chaps.

DE HOLY BONDS OB SCRAPRIMONY.

Dis day I'se gwin ter write you a few unvarnished fae's
About a few fings common 'mongst de whites an' blacks.
Ob course, de color's diff'runt an' neber should be mixed.
Each one was by de Marster on purpose dat way fixed.
But when it comes to huntin' each one is 'bout de same
He goes wid all his power 'spressly fo' de game.
He may be huntin' 'possum, or maybe so a wife:
Each one is jes' as pressin'—the greatest fng in life.
An' when he goes a-courtin', it takes much tho't an' time
To fix up all der clothing an' git demselves in prime.
Dey sits an' looks so smilin' yo' neber tink de're mean,
Dere manner so beguilin', de sweetes' eber seen.
Dey keeps on shëddin' sweetness until de weddin' past.
An' den dey 'gins to slacken,—ob course, it couldn't last.
De wife puts 'way her toggin' an' neber dresses neat,
'Cept when out paradin' 'fo'e fellers on de street.
De man wastes all his smilin' on dem what's dressed so well,
An' when he goes to supper is fixed to fuss a spell.
De wife was out a-milkin' an' den she had to churn.
An' while de baby's nussen she let de bread all burn.
Or maybe so she's richer an' needn't do all dis.
But somehow she's forgotten to meet him wid a kiss.
Den while he's feelin' fussy, perhaps from business cares.
He doesn't go to courtin' but almos' shorely swears.
An' when dey stops dat courtin' it's mighty bad, ob
course,
For soon dey goes to courtin' wid lawyers for divorce.
But if yo' would be happy an' hab your wife so too,
Don't let yo'se'f git snappy, nor come home mad nor blue,
An' ef yo' wants ter raise ol' Cain I'm shore it aint
no harm,
Jes' so it ain't wid Liza Jane, but dat growed on de farm.
Be sho yo' always kiss her each time yo' go an' come.
An' train yo'se'f to miss her jes' like yo' do yo' chum.
For kisses are de sarehlights dat brightens up dis life.
Dat patches up de troubles 'tween husbands an' dey wife.
When Liza sees me comin' she meets me at de doh.
An' sech a mighty smackin' yo' neber heard befoh.
An' dat's why we're so happy, so young an' yet so old.
Because we're neber scrappy, an' love is neber cold.

DIS HERE NIGGER NEBER FRETS.

Mos' all de darkies hereabouts
Am lookin' mighty sad,
While some hangs down dere heads an' pouts.
An' some gits cussin' mad.
An' some gits sorter skeered up, too,
Dey fear de whitecap band,
An' swear dey don't know how to do
To work de white folks' land.
Ob co'se, de times am mighty tight,
An' money mighty skase,
An' some folks say a big ol' fight
Would help de human race.
But dis here nigger can't fergit
De year ob '63,
He ain't got ober dat skeer yet ,
Altho' hit set him free.
But dis here nigger neber frets.
An' neber has de blues,
'Case he always pays his debts
An' reads de Dallas News.
An' he's done learned long time ago,
From readin' ob de News,
What all de folks ought now to know,—
To raise all dat dey use.
I tell you dat's de onliest way
De poor folks can succeed,—
Des raise yo co'n, yo' oats, yo' hay.
An' eb'rything yo' needs.
An' don't forget to raise ol' cain.—
I'm sure it ain't no harm,—
Des' so it ain't wid Liza Jane,
But dat growed on de farm.
An' raise yo' pigs an' chickens, too,
Den read De News at night,
An' raise yo' kids—jes' one or two—
Be shore yo' raise 'em right.
Dis plan ob crops so 'varsified
I'm willin' now to bet,
If once by all de folks is tried,
Will put dem out ob debt.

DE BOLL WEEBIL.

De pesky weebils come each year and nips off ebry square.
Ob course, de farmers would 'nt keer to gib a little share;
But den dey bores de half-grown bolls an' kills de silky
looks.

An' stops de grof ob fleecy rolls what makes our shirts
an' sox.

Dat fills de farmer's heart wid care, an' sadly 'round
he mopes.

While dry, dead fo'ms lie ebrywhere, jes' like his blasted
hopes.

An' e'en de clouds dat float so high what wears de silvur
linin'.

Jes' smiled and passed us by, an' neber heed our pinin'.
All froo de spring dey neber shed a sympathetic tear,
To make de farmers go ahead and fill his heart wid cheer.
No wonder farmers had de blues an' thoo de summer
hours

Dey neber cared to read De News nor smell de fragrant
flowers.

He said, de rains dey come too late to do us any good.
De craps were dead an' couldn't wait, like weeds an'
flowers could.

Dey wouldn't plant de craps ag'in; too late to plant in
June;

Aldo we mout git lots ob rain, it wa'nt shown by de
moon.

But some ob us what reads De News diversified our craps.
An' we haint sorter got de blues, an' neder hab our chaps.
We planted taters, beans an' corn, an' later planted more.
We worked 'em, too, shore as yo' born, until we all wus
sore.

We watered taters frum de well, an' all our garden truck:
Sich patient work will always tell; dat's what gibs us
our luck.

An' when de winter days shall come wid rain an' weather
windy,

We're happy in our own nice home, a-readin' "Aunt
Lucindy."

An' we haint sorter got de blues, an' neder hab our chaps.
'Case we reads de good ol' News an' 'versifies our craps.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON IN TOWN.

Workin', plowin' all de week,
Wid a yoke ob brindle steers,
Seems today I needs to seek
Where de troubles disappears.
So I always goes to town
Dat my language might cool down
'Fore de church time in de mawnin'.

Workin', plowin' all de while,
Early morn till dewy eve,
Sea'cely time to crack a smile
Much less time to grieve.
Co'se I gits my language mixed,
Now's de time to git it fixed
'Fore de church time in de mawnin'.

Singin', plowin' fru de stumps
Meks a mighty jerky song.
An' a feller gits some bumps.
Meks his prayers all come out wrong.
But a rest from all dem cares
Changes cussin' back to prayers
'Fore de church time in de mawnin'.

Ef I should drink a few small draps
Ob good sperits while in town,
An' don' hab no fights nor scraps.—
Sho' de Lord won't turn me down,—
It jes' puts my voice in trim
For to sing long-metered hymns
For de church kwair in de mawnin'.

DE CHANGE.

(Culled from de conversation ob two cullud pussons by Uncle Peter.)

“De melon-choley days hab come,
De saddest ob de year,”
De water-melon season’s done,
An’ cotton pickin’ ’s here.
But let’s don’t pine—it ain’t no use—
We’d git too sweet to taste de juice;
We all must hab a change.

We culler’d folks de proper truck;
See what de papers say,—
Dey prints de picture ob each buck
Dat tries to git too gay.
Dey writes about long lazy Jim,
An’ meks a hero out ob him
Because he tuk some change.

De white folks sing our best coon songs
An’ imitate our ways,
An’ try to take up wid our wrongs
To win de public gaze.
Sich stuff as dis gibs us disgust;
If dey don’t quit I guess we must
Soon mek a little change.

Dey cannot cook a decent meal,—
See what a face dey make
When we goes to de cotton fiel’
An’ dey mus’ wash an’ bake;
Dey always ’gins to fuss an’ yelp,—
Dey can’t git ’long widout our help,
Jes’ for a little change.

We do not hab to work so much
As we did long ago;
We’s got de white folks in our clutch,
But dey don’t seem to know.
We’ll loaf about an’ take our ease,
An’ steal or work jes’ as we please.
To git a little change.

THE OLD SLAVE.

The old-time slaves are passing away,
Their kinky locks are turning gray,

As now they totter to the grave;
But they are just as debonair,
As full of joy, as free from care,
As when they served as trusted slave.

They pointed out the comet star
That once foretold the coming war
Which wrecked and ruined our southern land.
While "Massa" went away to fight,
And die for what he thought was right,
They formed the home protecting band.

We all of us did doubtless know
Some old-time darkey long ago.
Yes, one to us both true and tried,
Whose kindly acts we cherish yet,
Whose trusting heart we'll ne'er forget,
Tho' years and years ago she died.

Aunt Dorcas, known both far and near,
Hath given to hundreds hope and cheer;
Yes, hundreds racked by ceaseless pain,
By words of wit, old darkey style,
By gentle touch and cheerful smile,—
'Tis sad that few such now remain.

When they with those who wore the grey
From earthly walks have passed away,
Let us who linger here behind
Recount in song and story, too,
The valrous deeds our Southland knew,
Its former glory now declined.

And may the roses' sweet perfume,
Pervade the sacred, silent tomb
That guards the dust of those so brave,
And at the final Judgment Day
The worthy ones who wore the grey
Will serve their God with trusted slave.

THE BETHESDA HOT ARTESIAN WELLS.

Some years ago a driller came to Marlin Town to stay
And said he'd get us water, if we'd let him, right away.
The City Fathers set him drilling; down more than half
a mile

He struck a stream of water that made the Fathers smile.
Until each one had drunk a swig; his smile then was a
frown;

It was so hot and nasty, too! they said 'twould ruin our
town.

Darkies said 'twas debbil's dish water—from whence it
came, no doubt.

An' "de debbil's gwinter git yo' ef yo' don't watch out!"

The people here had never tho't the hot place was so near.
But when the stuff came out so hot it gave them all a
skeer;

They turned the well into the ditch and said their prayers
each night,

And each one tried to treat his friend the way he tho't
was right.

The minnows in the ditch below soon grew to monstrous
size,

And poor old cows became so fat it gave us all surprise.
The people would not drink the stuff; they still were quite
devout,—

"De debbil's gwinter git yo' ef yo' don't watch out."

The mangy dogs that bayed the moon and barked the
livelong night

Were soon so fat and sleek they slept because they were
all right.

The crippled tramps that wandered by, who drank, were
soon made well;

And folks soon thought such healing stuff could never
come from hell.

And so the sick folks drank it then and soon became
robust,

And all were long and loud in praise,—e'en those at first
who cussed.

As each grew in health each day they all began to doubt
“De debbil’s gwinter git yo’ ef yo’ don’t watch out.”

And so this wondrous water here has changed this Marlin
Town,
Has brought us health and wealth and fame along with
its renown:
Now boarding houses dot the place, and feed you very
well,
But one thing more they often do, of which I wish to tell;
They work for scheming fakirs here as their commission
men,
And try to be your friend at once that they might “boost”
you in.
So warn your friends before they leave to know what
they’re about,
Or the “boosters” will catch them if they don’t watch out.

CONTRIBUTIONS inspired by the hot water.

QUERY.

“God made the country and man made the town.”
But who made the Marlin hot well?
’Twas the City, of course, that went boring on down
Till they most reached the outskirts of—well,
Till they came pretty near to the antipodes,
And would soon have bored clear through the Empire
Chinese.

God made the country with freedom and health,
And all of the space that we need,
While man made the town with its struggle for wealth,
Its selfishness, grafting and greed,
But WHO is the stoker beneath the hot well?
The d-dickens, you answer, that no one can tell.

—Jim Crow.

THE HOT WELL.

From out the depths the world below
There comes a stream with warmth aglow.
It rushes, bubbles, sparkles bright
With Nature's balm and heaven's light.
At Hygeia's fount behold the sick,
Around its brink they cluster thick.

They quaff from cup and tinted glass,—
A stream of sufferers—on they pass.
The cripple poor on crutches comes
And drinks with hope till pain succumbs
To healing draught that lightly pours
From out the "Great Physician's" stores.

The pale, the bloodless mopes along
And stands with cup among the throng,
Till roses bloom in faded cheek
And laughing eyes of health bespeak.
Rheumatics' sore and ceaseless pain
Is surely by these waters slain.

The poor dyspeptic, spirits blue,
Turns in surprise to life anew.
And smiles and sings of real life
With hope and joy and pleasure rife.
Here's to these waters strangely warm,
So pure, so full of health and charm.

If I could build a statue high
Whose marble top could pierce the sky,
To Marlin's draught of health I'd build
And on its sides in gold I'd gild:
"Come all ye weary, sick, distressed,
Drink of these waters and be blest."

—Mrs. Nannie Curtiss.

TRUTH AND HOPE.

We all of us have oft heart tell
How Truth, fair maid, lives in a well.
And much she loves her crystal home,—
She seems so disinclined to roam.
Our reason for this statement odd
Is, she's so seldom met abroad.

Another story we do know
About Pandora's box of woe.
With curiosity the maid
Was overcome: her trust betrayed,
She turned the key within the locks
That guarded safe her mystic box,
And thus released the flood of ill
That overwhelms us humans still.
In great dismay she dropped the lid
Nor saw that Hope within was hid.
Which teaches us that 'mid our pains,
Our griefs and troubles, Hope remains.

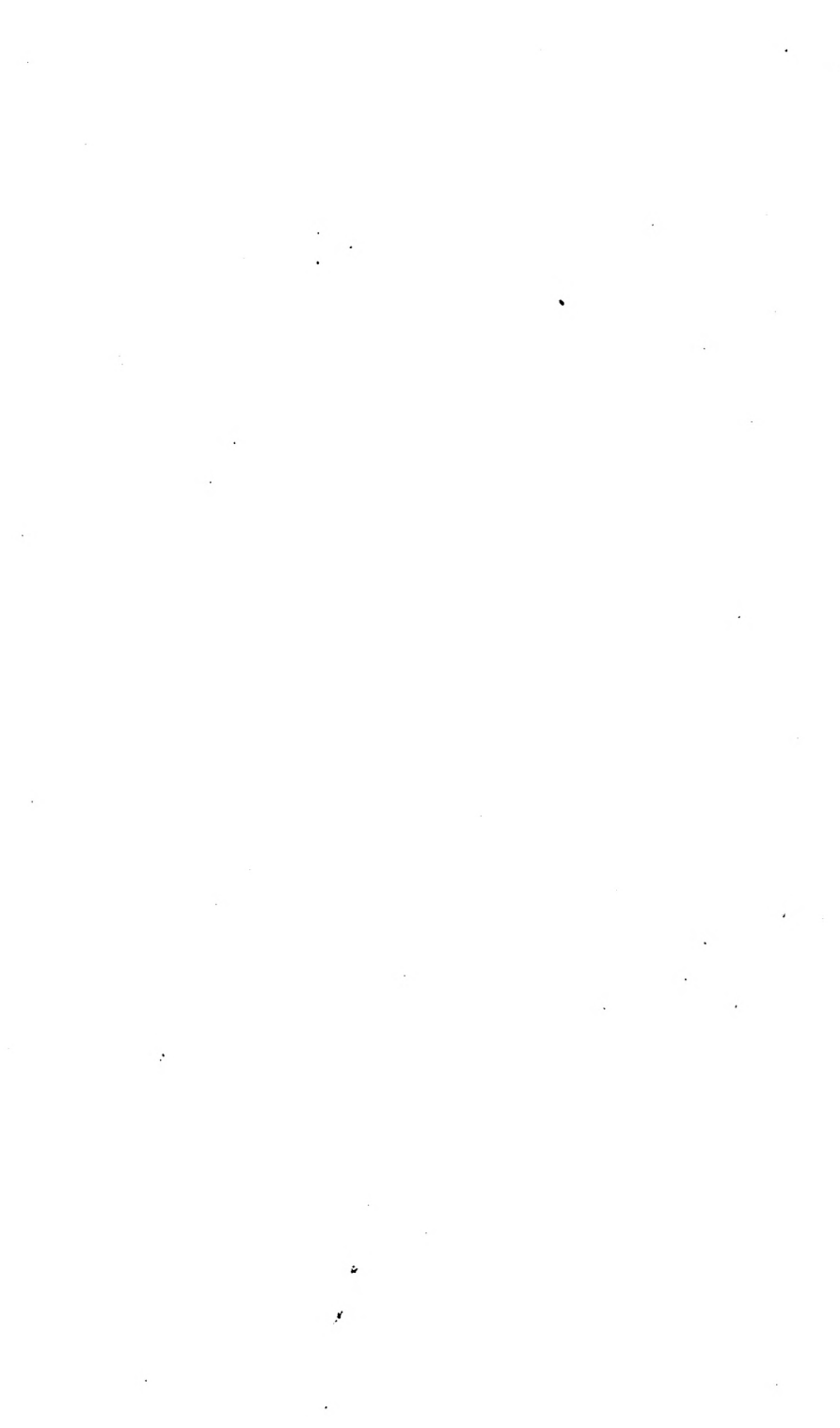
Now, where upon this earth so round
Can Truth and Hope today be found?
Why, they have chosen both to dwell
Together here in Marlin's well.
They pour their gifts with lavish hand
On those who come, a dreary band,
All burdened with the weight of woe
Pandora loosed so long ago.
Here at the fountain they do find
New health and strength and peace of mind.
And going home they love to tell
The wonders of the Marlin well.

—“Little Mac.”

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